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Cold case murder guilty plea receives 65 year sentence

Rodney Denk pleads guilty to the 1989 murder of Amy Weidner

(Indianapolis, Ind.) Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced that Rodney Denk was sentenced today to 65 years in the Indiana Department of Correction for the 1989 murder and rape of Amy Weidner. The investigation was resumed and charges against Denk were filed in 2012. Today Denk pleaded guilty as charged to Murder and Rape in Criminal Court 1 and was sentenced according to a plea agreement mandating a set 65 year IDOC sentence.

Denk admitted in his guilty plea to beating, sexually assaulting and strangling Amy Weidner on November 13, 1989. The crime occurred while Amy was in her mother's home. Weidner was 16 years old.

Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department Detective Sgt. William Carter resumed the investigation in 2012. Through the course of the investigation, Det. Carter and Sgt. David Ellison with IMPD interviewed witnesses and reviewed evidence. A hand print discovered at the scene in 1989 was compared to a print from Denk with a positive identification.

The maximum sentence for Murder in 1989 was 60 years.

The Denk case is one of several cold cases charged since 2011. Most recently, Michael Ackerman was arrested in April and charged in the 1977 beating death of 18-month-old William T. (Billy) Wood. He has been charged with Second Degree Murder, the statute in effect at the time of this offense, and is scheduled for a jury trial in August.

In October 2012, a jury found Frank Tiller guilty of the murder of Victor Greg, a crime that went unsolved for a decade before DNA technology and work by the Cold Case Homicide Unit of IMPD solved it. He was sentenced to 60 years in the DOC.

In June 2012, a jury convicted Paul Reese, Sr., for the murder of Dawn Stuard, who was 13 years old at the time of her death in 1987. Reese was sentenced to 60 years in prison.

Currie O'Bryant pleaded guilty to Attempted Robbery in March 2013 for his involvement in the murder of Johnny Rhoades, Jr. He was sentenced to 30 years in the IDOC.

A charge of a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

-30-

Note: The plea agreement is available at: <http://bit.ly/120yrUq>

The charging information and probable cause affidavit are available at: <http://bit.ly/163vMhc>

A booking photo of Rodney Denk is available at: <http://bit.ly/1abscFl>